

MINUTES
Regular Meeting of the
Edina Heritage Preservation Board
Edina City Hall – Community Room
August 9, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Welcome New Member – Robert Moore

I. ROLL CALL 7:00 p.m.

Answering roll call were Chairman Stegner, and Members Carr, Davis, Schwartzbauer, Curran, Rehkamp-Larson, Curran Anger, Ahlstrom, Moore, and Thorson. Absent was Student Member McLellan. Others present were Consultant Robert Vogel and Planning Intern, Elizabeth Montgomery.

II. MINUTES APPROVED Regular meeting of July 12, 2011

Motion was made by Member Schwartzbauer and seconded by Member Ahlstrom approving the minutes from the regular meeting of July 12, 2011 as corrected. All voted aye. The motion carried.

III. COMMUNITY COMMENT None

IV. REPORTS /RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness: H-11-6 4607 Wooddale Avenue

Request: Changes to the street facing façade and moving the detached garage to the northeast corner of the rear yard

Consultant Vogel introduced the proposed plans pointing out that they were straight forward and simple. He recommended that the request be approved subject to the plans presented.

Andy Campbell from M/A Peterson explained that their main goal for the house is to reflect modern family needs while also protecting the house and the neighborhood. They want to restore the original elegance of the house and at the same time, make it more livable.

Homeowner, Mr. Michael Carrel, 4607 Wooddale Avenue explained that there was an addition to the house in 1997, converting the garage to a Family Room - he finds the design to be not family friendly. The need for a more functional layout - compatible for the family lifestyle, while improving the exterior American Colonial character of the home is what has driven this project.

Board members asked for clarification on several design elements of the plan which Mr. Campbell provided.

Member Rehkamp-Larson commented on how simple the plans are and how symmetrical the idea was. She noted, however, that it was not perfectly symmetrical. She wanted to know if there was any way to fix that. Mr. Campbell explained that it would be difficult to achieve without tearing down the house and starting over.

Member Davis noted that Donald Geesaman, 4607 Drexel Avenue submitted a written comment expressing concern that by moving the garage to the northeast corner of the yard, new shadows would affect his garden that abuts the property line. Davis stated that since Mr. Geesaman indicated that he could not attend the meeting because he is deaf, perhaps staff could advise him of the outcome of the request by letter. Members Ahlstrom and Curran both voiced their agreement Mr. Geesaman should be made aware of what was going on.

Member Davis moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness request subject to the plans presented. Member Anger seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried.

The Board then commended Mr. Campbell for the very through presentation.

B. White Oaks Discussion: continued from July 12th meeting

Chairman Stegner recognized Cheryl Appeldorn, President of the White Oaks Improvement Association.

Ms. Appeldorn thanked the Board for touring the neighborhood on July 12th and provided the following neighborhood data which had been requested:

There are a total of 65 homes in the neighborhood - 60 of the homes were built between 1948 and 1951; 3 were built in 1951; 1 was built in 1973, and 1 final one was built in 1986. Since 1986, there may have been 1 torn down in 1985 or 1987. 7 more have been torn down or remodeled. 5 of those have occurred since 2005.

Responding to a request for his opinion, Consultant Vogel stated that the information provided by the neighborhood association coincides with the data the City currently has on the neighborhood. Further research in the form of a contextual study would be required before any type of designation of the area could be considered. As to the concern of massing, City Council has gone up and down. Policy was made to reaffirm the Comprehensive Plan in 2008 - 2009.

Member Carr mentioned that she has been doing research and the first city she has looked at was Los Angeles. In LA there are 29 neighborhood committees that regulate the neighborhoods. She asked if that would be something worth to look into.

Consultant Vogel said that the Council has not discouraged a move in that direction, however from a practical stand point; it is often difficult to manage the neighborhood committees.

Member Carr said that in LA, their system seems to be working well and they have used it since 1979.

Consultant Vogel replied that it doesn't. Neighbors are even worse at regulating. LA's system is complicated. Dallas, however, regulates very well. There are 7 areas and they are all tailor-made. Mr. Vogel pointed out that in LA, they have 1 member they can assign to each neighborhood group and they meet up to 2 or 3 times a month.

Consultant Vogel observed that the impact of teardowns and new construction in established neighborhoods is becoming a huge concern nationally, even in non-historic districts. Often times, the replacement homes can change the profile of a neighborhood.

Member Curran asked if it had to be so complicated. The prime concern appears not to be the tear downs, but massing of the new homes.

Consultant Vogel responded that recently, Edina's zoning code was amended to address massing by making the worse type of McMansioning difficult.

Member Schwartzbauer stated that it isn't a question of what to do, but rather an issue of how to help and change policy. He added that he did not think addressing massing in the neighborhoods was the HPB's place because it wasn't a historical preservation problem.

Board members briefly discussed the history of Edina's neighborhoods, many of which (to include White Oaks) have reached the 50 year mark - the threshold for preservation.

Consultant Vogel pointed out that the age is only one of the requirements. He went on to list several criteria that are considered. He stated that there is no historical context for White Oaks and that there has been a lack of information since 1999. He added that the only "neighborhoods" identified in Edina's Historic Context Study were the Country Club District, Morningside, and Minnehaha Creek.

Member Rehkamp-Larson said it appeared that first step should be to create an historic context for the neighborhood.

Consultant Vogel said that it would be appropriate to revisit. However, Minneapolis Heights in the NW quadrant of the city is much older (1880's), has been identified as one of the next areas to evaluate.

Mr. Vogel pointed out that the data accumulated through context studies provides one of the important tools to compare neighborhoods and establish priorities.

A brief discussion ensued, after which Member Davis moved that Member Carr lead a committee to research how other communities address protecting the character of their neighborhoods and to report back to the HPB.

Member Carr inquired if other board members planned on attending the State Preservation Conference this fall; pointing out that would be an opportune time to ask others groups how their cities handle neighborhood preservation.

Consultant Vogel said that there are many different overlays and way of empowering neighborhoods. The problem is that they always want the city to do their policing. Plain vanilla zoning is the approach that most take which makes it easier for city planners to handle.

Member Carr mentioned that she had met a South Carolinian at the conference last fall and he had told her about what they do.

Consultant Vogel said that in South Carolina they preserve very little. Minnesota has been very effective in protecting historic sites. Out east, there are very few rules and they only deal with a tiny fraction. The Edina HPB deals with large chunks of the city and knows far more about its history than the board in Minneapolis knows about their community.

Member Carr wondered if neighborhood preservation would be a good topic to bring before the council again.

Member Curran said that there are multiple things going on in the HPB right now. She expressed a desire to better understand what the Council has already done, and offered to do the research for the board. Board members agreed that would be helpful.

Chairman Stegner reminded the board that there is a motion on the floor. Member Davis amended his motion by proposing that Member Carr research overlays in other cities and that Member Curran research what the Council has discussed before. Member Rehkamp-Larson seconded the motion. All said Aye.

Chairman Stegner asked Consultant Vogel if the state would provide funding for research.

Consultant Vogel said yes, funding is feasible but it could be expensive and difficult to manage.

Chairman Stegner said that the city is actively looking at neighborhoods; this would just be historical conservation. Member Rehkamp-Larson added that this would unify neighborhoods more, letting them see what is in front of them.

Consultant Vogel pointed out that Edina is a city of neighborhoods that are cohesive and self-identifying. Boundaries have not changed much over time, which could be historical as well. The problem is that everything is historical. It's all a juggling act to find a balance.

Member Rehkamp-Larson recognized the need to understand the historic context of a neighborhood, and added that even though she has been on the board for some time, that concept was still not real clear. Consultant Vogel understood noting that it takes time.

Following a brief discussion, Chair Stegner concluded that the ideas exchanged had been most beneficial, and he looked forward to continuing work on the subject.

C. Southdale Center Heritage Landmark Potential

Addressing the potential for Southdale to be designated a heritage landmark property, Consultant Vogel said that he has had mixed emotions. A designation would be based solely on what took place there and not what has been left behind. This is an example of a non-protective use of a historical overlay. He pointed out that the designation would be designed to tell the story of Southdale for the owners – this would be a museum approach. There have been other times when items the public cannot see have been designated, such as archeology sites; however, the items are not usually as small as items such as the original bird cages or the clock.

Mr. Vogel pointed out that a potential plan of treatment would essentially be a contract between the City of Edina and the owners of Southdale. The site would have the ability to be redeveloped, with the designation being similar to that of the Edina Theatre marquee. The key thing would be to preserve it and keep it in the neighborhood. We would most likely designate the entire site. The story telling itself would not need to be elaborate - signs or information online. The items would need to be professionally curated. Vogel explained that he has talked to city staff and found there are no proposed projects that the HPB can piggyback onto at this time.

Mr. Vogel concluded that a landmark designation for Southdale may not be easy, however it is doable. Quietly introducing the idea may be the best approach.

Responding to questions from the Board, Consultant Vogel explained that the entire site would have to be included in the designation. We cannot just designate parts of buildings as it is not only prohibited, but it is also dangerous to do. If the building were to be torn down, the historically identified items would need to be properly curated to ensure that they do not leave the city.

Board members questioned the designation process and how it should be approached. Mr. Vogel said that ideally negotiations should be undertaken before beginning a nomination study.

Discussion ensued regarding the remaining historic elements that exist at the center. Vogel explained that he had been told that almost all is in storage. There would be no reason for

anyone to ship it off site and it hasn't turned up in the art market. He added that once artifacts leave Southdale or the city, they would no longer have historic value. At that point, it would be the City's Art Board's position to track them down.

Further discussion continued on the importance of recognizing the history of Southdale Center. Members Moore and Anger volunteered to work on gathering information on the current status of the inventory as well as determining the mood of the Southdale owners toward some type of historic recognition.

Consultant Vogel pointed out that Southdale is an important part of Edina's history as evidenced by being included in the City's Historic Context Study. Responding to a question regarding whether legacy funds might be available to assist in paying for the required research; Mr. Vogel pointed out that the HPB might qualify for legacy funds, however the State has frowned on the idea in the past. The State Preservation Office doesn't want it to become a trend where cities ask for money for museums. If the funds are pursued, it may need to be called something else or we'll have to find another way.

Chair Stegner thanked the Board for their insights into the potential for designating Southdale, and recognized Members Moore and Anger for their willingness to work on this project. No formal action was taken.

D. Edina Women's Study Report – Continued

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS – None

VIII. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairman Stegner reminded the Board that the annual State Preservation Conference is scheduled for September 22 and 23 in Faribault, MN. Planner Repya has provided registration forms for the Board, and he encouraged members consider attending the conference. Ms. Repya will accept registration forms until Thursday, August 18th.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE – September 13, 2011

X. ADJOURNMENT – 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Montgomery